

Summary of the Chief of General Staff's Review of the Expert Committee's Findings Examining the Investigative Quality of the IDF Regarding the Events of October 7th

The Chief of the General Staff: “Transparency is a necessary condition for maintaining the public’s trust in the IDF. It is also a fundamental requirement for our ability to improve. The committee’s findings are not the final word; they are part of an ongoing process of examination, learning, and implementation that the IDF will continue to pursue in the coming years.”

Today (Monday) November 10th 2025, the Expert Committee appointed to examine and assess the investigative quality of the IDF regarding the events of October 7th 2023, led by Major General (Res.) Sami Turgeman, presented its integrative findings to the Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant General Eyal Zamir, and to the General Staff Forum.

Upon assuming his position, the Chief of General Staff, LTG Eyal Zamir, appointed a committee of experts headed by MG (Res.) Sami Turgeman, with the participation of multidisciplinary military experts, to examine the inquiries conducted by the IDF regarding the events of October 7th. The committee was required to review and evaluate the quality of the General Staff investigations, to delve into the findings and conclusions drawn from them, to categorize them according to their quality, and to provide recommendations on the main courses of action for the work plan, from a systematic and integrative perspective.

Upon the appointment of the expert committee on March 22nd 2025, the committee approached its mission with humility and a deep sense of reverence, fully aware of the magnitude of its responsibility and with a profound and painful recognition of the heavy price paid in the greatest failure in the history of the IDF.

The committee reviewed and evaluated the quality of the investigations conducted within the IDF since March 7th 2024, following the directive of the then Chief of the General Staff, LTG Herzi Halevi, to conduct an internal General Staff investigation of the “Swords of Iron” War. The committee conducted an in-depth analysis of the inquiries and, for the first time, examined all of them through a systemic and integrative lens.

The committee dealt only with IDF inquiries, without examining the interface between the political and military echelons, or between the IDF and parallel security agencies.

In addition to the information available from the inquiries, the committee issued a “call for information” to relevant officers in mandatory and reserve service, in order to find voices and perspectives that were not yet reflected in the inquiries. Every inquiry received in this framework was examined thoroughly and personally. In addition, the committee interviewed approximately 80 officials relevant to the events of October 7th and the preceding years.

The committee conducted an in-depth review of 25 inquiries and found variations in their quality. Some were professional, comprehensive, and enabled learning and progress; some provided a solid factual foundation but did not identify points of failure or necessary changes; some were incomplete; and some were unsatisfactory. For each inquiry reviewed, the committee produced a detailed professional assessment of its quality and attached concrete recommendations.

The committee that reviewed the investigations found that all commanders involved in the process acted with integrity and sincerity, driven by a genuine intent to conduct a truthful and thorough inquiry.

In addition, the committee identified topics that had not yet been investigated, and therefore recommended to the Chief of the General Staff to complete them— primarily the handling of intelligence reports received over the years, and the systemic and operational aspects of the “Jericho Wall” plan.

The expert committee, after studying, analyzing, and delving into the information before it, consolidated insights that allowed it to build an integrative picture of six factors, which it identified as the main explanatory causes of the failure of October 7th.

1. Conceptual failure – a gap between the strategic and operational reality and the perception of reality regarding the Gaza Strip and Hamas.
2. Intelligence failure – in understanding the reality, in assessing the threat, and in failing to provide a warning.
3. Lack of engagement with the “Jericho Wall” plan.
4. Organizational and operational culture – characterized by flawed patterns and norms that had deteriorated over the years.
5. A persistent and significant gap at all command and professional levels between the defined threat and the operational response.
6. Deficient decision-making processes and force deployment on the night of October 7, 2023

The committee of experts determined that the surprise of October 7th did not emerge from a vacuum or a lack of information — quite the opposite. On the night of October 7th, direct intelligence had accumulated which, had it been professionally analyzed, could and should have led to an alert and a significant operational response. The attack occurred against the backdrop of high-quality and exceptional intelligence that was already in the possession of various IDF units.

Furthermore, throughout 2023, senior military officials warned that Israel's enemies were identifying internal weakening processes that were undermining Israeli deterrence and increasing the likelihood of escalation. From an internal military perspective, it is evident that despite the warning, the necessary military actions were not taken to improve the IDF's alertness or readiness, nor to adjust the deployment of forces across the different arenas.

Most of the factors explaining the failure, as identified by the committee, span several years and multiple branches of the IDF. A finding which, in the committee's view, indicates a long-standing systemic and organizational failure.

The various units failed in:

The General Staff by severely underestimating the enemy, and despite defining it as a "terrorist army", the IDF did not develop a military response that corresponded to the enemy's growing capabilities.

The Operations Directorate by failing to prepare the military's for a surprise-war scenario; by neglecting to lead knowledge-development processes as a foundation for force buildup and operational employment (particularly the lessons from Operation Guardian of the Walls and the lack of engagement with the Jericho Wall plan); by failing to lead the creation of situational and operational assessments on the night of October 7th and thereafter; and by not identifying the key decisions required for managing the fighting or properly adapting the use of force.

The Intelligence Directorate by failing to identify the strategic and operational developments of Hamas over the years, and by neglecting to maintain ongoing military research regarding the strength of the "terrorist army."

The Intelligence Directorate failed to provide an early warning. Its various units did not fulfill their responsibility to study Hamas and to issue an alert regarding war in the Gaza Strip. The intelligence collection conception for the area was based on a narrow approach that did not allow for effective warning. As a result, while Hamas' military wing was transitioning from routine to emergency — preparing for a large-scale surprise attack against the State of Israel — the IDF remained in a state of routine and at a low level of operational readiness.

The Southern Command failed to fulfill its role as the body responsible for providing early warning regarding the enemy in its sector, as well as for ensuring the security of the residents and the defense of the area under its jurisdiction. This failure reflects a deep and long-standing deficiency in military research — including in relation to the Jericho Wall plan. In addition, the command did not adapt its operational response: the force structure, alert level, and operational plans were not aligned with the threat.

Gaza Division: failed to fulfill its mission to defend against the threat from the Gaza Strip. It did not conduct in-depth processes to identify the enemy's changing patterns, did not maintain ongoing intelligence and operational engagement regarding the "Jericho Wall" plan, failed to carry out an orderly situational assessment and raise the alert level in light of the information

available to it on the night of October 7th, and failed to take initiative to adjust the deployment of its forces and operational readiness in the face of scenarios it itself had defined as “dangerous.”

Additional IDF units that contributed to the failure:

The Air Force failed to develop an effective response to defend the country’s airspace at low altitudes; it did not carry out orderly situational-assessment processes during the night of October 7; and it was unable to adapt its operational employment to the large-scale attack that exceeded the established reference scenarios.

The Navy failed to defend Israel’s shores at the outset of the war. It did not conduct regular situational-assessment processes during the night of October 7th, and its actual preparedness for the defense of strategic sites within Israel’s economic waters did not correspond to the threat, thereby increasing the level of risk.

However, regarding the Air Force and the Navy, it is worth noting that the IDF did not raise its alert level or adjust its readiness posture — measures that could have enabled a faster response to the severe scenario that ultimately materialized.

Regarding the night preceding the attack — despite its highly irregular nature — the committee did not identify a single commander or intelligence official who had compiled a thorough and professional picture of the enemy’s situation. No comprehensive intelligence assessment was formulated, nor was a professional discussion held on the alert level, which should have been raised. Above all, during the critical hours before the outbreak of the attack, not a single significant operational action was taken by the frontline forces or the reserves.

The committee finds it necessary to note that at the outbreak of the enemy’s attack, many IDF commanders rushed immediately to the southern sector — without being called and without orders. They courageously sought contact with the enemy and did everything in their power to repel the assault; some of them paid for it with their lives.

Regarding the inquiry of the Combat Intelligence Collection Corps – the committee fully accepted the inquiry’s conclusion that the performance of the female field observers, including while under a wide-scale attack and personal threat, was professional, exemplary, and carried out with composure. The female field observers continued to observe and report professionally .until their final moments

A retrospective analysis indicates that the information collected by the female field observers over time pointed to unusual enemy activity in the months preceding the war. A high-quality .intelligence analysis could have highlighted the change in the situation within the sector

Regarding the conclusions of the regional defense investigations, the committee accepted the findings of the inquiry committees, which determined that the heroism of the civilian security coordinators and the rapid-response teams was a significant factor influencing the outcomes of .the battles in several communities

The committee of experts found that, although the primary focus of regional defense should be the protection of the communities and civilians in the area, it is evident that the civilian sphere and the components of regional defense had been eroded and pushed to the margins of the .overall defense concept

Regarding the Nova inquiry, the committee accepted its findings and identified a gap in the understanding of regional responsibility. The committee recommended establishing a comprehensive and professional framework for the IDF's regional defense doctrine, with an emphasis on events that involve shared responsibility between the IDF and other security agencies.

The expert committee presented the Chief of the General Staff with systematic recommendations that will enable the implementation of the necessary changes and :adjustments in the IDF's force buildup and operational conduct, including

1. The establishment of a multidisciplinary committee led by the Deputy Chief of General Staff to develop a multi-year work plan for the implementation and adoption of the recommendations.
2. Placing the possibility of a surprise war as the foundation and guiding compass for the IDF's operational readiness, force buildup and organizational culture.
3. Continuing a deep reform process in the Intelligence Directorate, and placing wartime early-warning at the top of its priority list.
4. Reviewing the guiding doctrine and concept, the structure and the organization of the regional defense system to ensure alignment between the responsibilities of the area commanders (command, division, brigade) and the authorities to employ force and allocate the resources required to fulfill those responsibilities.
5. Setting a command standard that upholds military professionalism, with an emphasis on the professional training of personnel serving in the headquarters and command centers.

The committee of experts has completed its mission and submitted its conclusions and recommendations to the Chief of the General Staff. It does so with deep sorrow and bowed heads in memory of the fallen members of the security forces and the victims of terror attacks, extending its heartfelt and profound condolences to the bereaved families, and expressing hope .for the return of the hostages and the recovery of the wounded — both in body and in spirit

The Chief of the General Staff instructed that the committee's findings be presented to the General Staff Forum, both active-duty and reserve. He further directed that the committee's findings and lessons be presented in additional broad military frameworks and within command .training programs

:From the words of the Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant General Eyal Zamir

One of my first decisions as Chief of Staff was to appoint an independent committee of experts“ — a vital step toward restoring commanders' trust in the military investigation process, restoring the public's trust in the IDF and its commanders, and rebuilding and strengthening the

foundations of military professionalism. I wish to express my deep appreciation to the members of the committee, headed by Major General (res.) Sami Turgeman, who acted with great dedication, thoroughness, and professionalism, and examined the investigations in depth and in "a courageous manner

We are investigating a tremendous failure — one that cost human lives, that touched countless families who lost what was most precious to them; a failure reflected in the hostages who returned and in those whose bodies are still held by the murderous terrorists in Gaza.

Our responsibility is not to blur or conceal this failure, but to look it straight in the eye — and learn from it.

The committee that reviewed the inquiries found that all commanders involved in the process acted with integrity and sincerity, driven by a genuine intent to conduct a truthful and thorough inquiry.

Alongside the failure, the IDF has also demonstrated its ability to recover from the crisis of October 7th. Over the past two years, we have been fighting a multi-front war with courage, determination, and an unwavering drive to engage the enemy — achieving unprecedented successes across multiple arenas. The ability of commanders who failed on October 7th to rise from the shock, to fight, to lead their forces to extraordinary achievements, and to simultaneously change and grow stronger — is the ultimate proof of the IDF's resilience.

The corrections we will implement following this report will be integrated into every operational and combat activity, as well as into all working plans for the coming years — to ensure that the IDF continues to defend the people of Israel and fulfill its mission.

Today, we conclude the phase of the October 7th inquiries within the IDF. We have turned over every stone in order to understand the events and the reasons that led to this immense and painful failure. The purpose was to learn and to uncover the truth within the IDF — and from here, we move forward toward implementation, correction, and growth

The expert committee's report presented today is a significant step toward achieving the comprehensive understanding that we, as a society and as an organization, require. However, to ensure that such failures never recur, a broader understanding is needed — one that encompasses the inter-organizational and inter-hierarchical interfaces that have not yet been examined. To that end, a broad and comprehensive systemic investigation is now necessary.

From the pain, and from the battles we are still fighting today, we will build resilience and renewal for the day after. From the rupture, we will secure a safer future for the people of Israel. And out of responsibility, we will continue to be an army that defends the nation and ensures its existence.